

Ofcom: Draft Annual Plan 2013/14

The Digital TV Group (DTG) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the above consultation regarding Ofcom's draft proposals for their priorities and work areas in the financial year 2013/14.

[Q1.] What are your views on Ofcom's proposed priorities for 2013/14?

The DTG welcome the obligation on 800 MHz licensees to prevent or mitigate potential interference of 4G signals into Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) and believes that this should include assisting consumers' through easy access to relevant support and advice.

Regarding any "adjustments to mitigation measures in the light of experience", the DTG is well placed to provide testing and measurement for coexistence as well as conformance testing for mitigation solutions e.g. filters. Further to this, the DTG can act as a trusted and neutral platform for engaging with manufacturers and groups representing users of Short Range Devices (SRDs) to "address potential interference issues arising from LTE handsets".

The ITU-R decision after the WRC-12 was to have co-primary usage of the 700 MHz for mobile broadband; with this in mind, it is imperative that the research into coexistence of DTT and mobile is robust and comprehensive. Similar work related to white space device usage should also be a priority for Ofcom. The DTG is currently involved in a possible solution through:

- testing in our GTEM Cell through the KTN TIC ¹
- testing in the field through the TVWS Field Trial Group
- encouraging industry dialogue and the sharing of information through the Dynamic Spectrum Access group

The DTG also welcomes Ofcom's current consultation on the 600 MHz plan; including the proposal to create "new, temporary high definition (HD) digital terrestrial TV (DTT) multiplexes [...] adopt(ing) the more efficient DVB-T2 and MPEG4 technologies" ² and any attempt to encourage consumer take-up of equipment which makes use of more efficient technologies; particularly if it is part of a wider strategy applicable to the existing DVB-T multiplexes or related to the 700 MHz clearance. It should however, only form a small part of broader initiative that is needed to encourage the take-up of DVB-T2 equipment use during the interim period.

Some DTG members have requested further evidence based analysis to identify the cost and consumer benefits of reallocating 700 MHz for mobile use before a final decision is made.

The DTG can also provide technical expertise and engage with its membership to assist Ofcom to work towards the most efficient use of spectrum.

¹ Knowledge Transfer Network Test and Innovation Centre

² <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/consultations/600mhz-award/summary> [Accessed: 06-02-2013]

[Q2.] *What are your views on Ofcom's proposed work areas for 2013/14?*

Secure optimal use of spectrum

The DTG is well placed to assist with the interim outcome of this Work Area through dialogue with its members who stand to be affected by future changes of use in 700 MHz band.

About the Digital TV Group (DTG)

The Digital TV Group (DTG) is the focal point of the UK's digital TV industry. The Group, a not-for-profit membership organisation, brings the industry together to enable the successful delivery and evolution of digital TV and associated technologies.

The DTG publishes and maintains the technical specification for Freeview, Freeview HD and Connected TV (the D-Book) and runs the digital television industry's ISO accredited test centre: DTG Testing.

The DTG has published and maintained the D-Book for over a decade and the specification is updated annually to keep up with the pace of development in UK DTT. The D-Book is compiled by DTG working groups comprised of the DTG's membership and staff who continually update and peer-review the specification.

The first edition of the D-Book was written in 1996 when the current UK standard for terrestrial broadcasting (DVB-T) was new and untried. Early editions of the D-Book enabled the publication of the European digital TV specification: the E-Book.

In March 2009, the DTG published the 6th edition of the D-Book - enabling the launch of an initial three free-to-air HD channels on Freeview by late 2009, as well as the introduction of a broadband return path which has the potential to be used for streaming on-demand video content such as BBC iPlayer, ITV Player and 4oD. It also introduced DVB-T2, the new modulation scheme that is being used in the UK to deliver these services.

In March 2011 the DTG published D-Book 7, the detailed interoperability specification for digital terrestrial television with extended Connected TV functionality. D-Book 7 provides an industry-agreed baseline specification for Connected TV products and services that Sky, Virgin Media, YouView and others can build on for trademark requirements to support their services.

The DTG's test centre: DTG Testing tests digital TV products applying for the Digital Switchover Certification Mark (the 'digital tick'), Freeview, Freeview + and Freeview HD logos against the D-Book standard. Any manufacturer wishing to use the Freeview HD logo on a product must pass the required DTG Testing Freeview HD tests.

Since the DTG was established over a decade ago, the Group has worked closely with our members to adapt international standards such as DVB-T and DVB-T2 to create an interoperable UK digital TV platform that consumers can rely on.

The DTG currently has liaisons with international standardisation bodies including DECE (Ultraviolet), ETSI, HbbTV, and the Open IPTV Forum (OIPF). The DTG has incorporated parts of these standards into D-Book 7 and adapted them to make them work for the UK market. Extensions have now been fed back to the standardisation bodies to enable the next generation of standards across Europe.

The DTG continues to allow Digital Europe to use areas of D-Book copyright under licence to encourage international harmonisation.

Following the publication of D-Book 7, the Group is now finalising the test and conformance regime for Connected TV products and services and supporting the development of next generation technologies such as LTE, TV white spaces and home networking.